

NORTHERN

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Inside Labor

CIA Works With Labor Leaders

By VICTOR RIESEL

Mr. Riesel

Certainly the Central Intelligence Agency and the American labor movement have cooperated.

Alliances between the intelligence communities and union federations are standard operating procedure in virtually all the free nations of the globe.

There must be such joint action in order to neutralize the Communist World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) headquarters in Prague. The WFTU is the "conduit of Communist money and manpower pouring into all continents in a drive to capture unions and sabotage democratic governments," former CIA Director Allen Dulles once told me.

Inside American labor, cooperations with the CIA privately is considered a badge of honor. There's been such intimate relations between the two apparatuses on a vast international front — and with labor leaders headquartered in Washington, New York, Chicago, Detroit, San Francisco and even Denver.

Not too many years ago, for example, the CIA was directed to thwart heavily financed Communist efforts to seize oil workers unions in the Mideast. If the WFTU's Mohammedan section could have pulled this coup, the Soviets would have been in a position to throttle much of the oil and fuel flow to the entire free world.

The CIA did what comes naturally. It contacted U. S. labor leaders. This is not difficult for the CIA — it certainly has a fine labor division, organized in the late forties.

There was — and is — one small national union which was just the outfit to move into the fight. It did.

But during this period its erudite president came up for reelection. He won. It takes money to run union campaigns.

The incumbent obtained funds from labor sources, much the same as his colleagues found such financing available ever since the ladies garment workers' Dave Dubinsky helped Walter Reuther capture the United Auto Workers back in 1946 in Atlantic City.

As a result, reports flared that

his campaign was financed by the "invisible government" — which even Arthur Schlesinger Jr. says does not exist.

The chap most responsible for spreading this story is the intense and didactic Victor Reuther, younger brother of the 59-year-old Walter.

Victor has spoken of it freely. He protests what he terms is CIA interference in the American labor movement.

Recently I discussed the matter with Sen. Fulbright. The gentleman from Arkansas says his Senate Foreign Relations Committee will probe the report.

The other day I talked with Sen. Eugene McCarthy. He asserted he would push for a probe of the story because he feels "CIA has gotten careless about domestic affairs."

"I'm concerned about the domestic CIA activities, said the to the international field alone.

"If the latter is true, I'm not concerned too much with foreign operations. But I want to know.

Probably the House Committee on Education and Labor will take a look, too, if some of its members, such as Frank Thompson, chairman of the Democratic Study Group, have their way. Many important "group" members are on the House committee and plan to push through such a probe.

They will find that American labor does not need CIA funds. The AFL-CIO headquarters down the street here spends over \$3 million yearly.

It helps to support such "action" as the African-American Labor Council from which Reuther has just resigned. This council is directed by the genial, one-man itinerant laborite "State-Dept." — Irving Brown. He has just returned from a 10-nation tour of French-speaking Africa — all the way from Dakar to Addis Ababa.

In Ethiopia Emperor Haile Selassie has pledged to donate 3,000 square meters on which the council will build a labor headquarters for CELU — Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions — which had two small offices and three typewriters when labor movement.

American labor action in part organic.

In Mombasa, Kenya, the international longshoremen have a dockwalloping team teaching the Africans how to run an efficient waterfront. In Nairobi there is an American-financed sewing factory; in Wampala, Uganda, there is a labor college; in Lagos there is a machine and automotive laborparts school; in Zambia the AFL-CIO is aiding President Kenneth Kaunda, one of the best friends the U. S. has.

In Latin-America, the council's counterpart launched by labor and management (GW) and the Grace Co., for example, is building three room which can be bought for \$380 down and \$24.18 a month.

Disease, hunger and hopelessness are fought as well as the Communists.

I have been there. I have spoken to the hopeless one year and found them strong, free men the next. In all this, the CIA is of no importance. Only humanity is.

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